

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-54. (Canceled)

55. (Previously Presented) A combination of separate molecules, comprising

(a) a first molecule comprising at least 5 amino acids selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1-20, 7-26, 8-18, 13-32, 37-56, 49-68, 61-80 and 73-92 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO: 1, SEQ ID NO: 2, SEQ ID NO: 3, SEQ ID NO: 4, SEQ ID NO: 5, SEQ ID NO: 6, SEQ ID NO: 7, and SEQ ID NO: 8; and

(b) a second molecule comprising at least 5 amino acids selected from the group consisting of amino acids 1688-1707, 1694-1713, 1706-1725, 1712-1731, 1718-1737, 1724-1743 and 1730-1749 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO: 9, SEQ ID NO: 10, SEQ ID NO: 11, SEQ ID NO: 12, SEQ ID NO: 13, SEQ ID NO: 14 and SEQ ID NO: 15, and

(c) a third molecule comprising at least 5 amino acids selected from the group consisting of amino acids 2263-2282, 2275-2294, 2287-2306, 2299-2318, and 2311-2330 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO: 16, SEQ ID NO: 17, SEQ ID NO: 18, SEQ ID NO: 19, and SEQ ID NO: 20, and

wherein said molecules of (a), (b) and (c) are each separate molecules from one another, wherein said molecules of (a), (b) and (c) are each different from one another and wherein said molecules are selected from the group consisting of peptides and polypeptides.

Claims 56-58. (Cancelled)

59. (Previously Presented) A combination according to claim 55, wherein said molecules comprising at least 5 amino acids are individually produced by recombinant expression or chemical synthesis.

60. (Previously Presented) A combination according to claim 55, wherein one or more of said first, second, or third molecules comprises a fusion polypeptide.

Claim 61. (Cancelled)

62. (Previously Presented) A combination according to claim 55, wherein the combination is packaged into a kit further comprising control reagents for detecting antibodies to hepatitis C virus (HCV) in a human body component suspected of containing said antibodies.

Claims 63-67. (Cancelled)

68. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 55, wherein at least one of said molecules comprises synthetic peptides or polypeptides.

69. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 68, wherein at least two of said molecules comprises synthetic peptides or polypeptides.

70. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 69, wherein at least three of said molecules comprises synthetic peptides or polypeptides.

71. (Currently Amended) A combination of molecules according to any of claims 55 [[and]] or 68-70, wherein at least one of said first, second and third molecules is selected from the group consisting of:

a first molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1-92 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1-92 of SEQ ID NO: 23;

a second molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1688-1749 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1688-1749 of SEQ ID NO: 23; and

a third molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 2263-2330 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 2263-2330 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

72. (Currently Amended) A combination of molecules according to any of claims 55 [[and]] or 68-70, wherein at least two of said first, second and third molecules is selected from the group consisting of:

a first molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1-92 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1-92 of SEQ ID NO: 23;

a second molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1688-1749 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1688-1749 of SEQ ID NO: 23; and

a third molecule comprising HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 2263-2330 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 2263-2330 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

73. (Currently Amended) A combination of molecules according to any of claims 55 [[and]] or 68-70, wherein:

said first molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1-92 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1-92 of SEQ ID NO: 23;

said second molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 1688-1749 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 1688-1749 of SEQ ID NO: 23; and

said third molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids 2263-2330 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids 2263-2330 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

74. (Withdrawn) A method for making a kit for detecting human antibodies that bind to HCV amino acids, comprising combining the combination of claim 71 with a support suitable for detecting whether antibodies bind to the molecules of said combination.

75. (Withdrawn) A method for making a kit for detecting human antibodies that bind to HCV amino acids, comprising combining the combination of claim 72 with a support suitable for detecting whether antibodies bind to the molecules of said combination.

76. (Withdrawn) A method for making a kit for detecting human antibodies that bind to HCV amino acids, comprising combining the combination of claim 73 with a support suitable for detecting whether antibodies bind to the molecules of said combination.

77. (Currently Amended) A combination according to any of claims 55 ~~[[and]]~~ or 68-70, wherein said first molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids other than amino acids 1-6 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids other than 1-6 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

78. (Currently Amended) A combination according to claim ~~any of claims~~-71, wherein said first molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids other than amino acids 1-6 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids other than 1-6 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

79. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 72, wherein said first molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids other than amino acids 1-6 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids other than 1-6 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

80. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 73, wherein said first molecule comprises HCV polyprotein amino acids only from amino acids other than amino acids 1-6 of an HCV polyprotein or only from amino acids other than 1-6 of SEQ ID NO: 23.

81. (Currently Amended) A combination of any of claims 55 ~~[[and]]~~or 68-70, wherein

said at least 5 amino acids of said first molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 7-26, 13-32, and 49-68 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4 and SEQ ID NO:6;

said at least 5 amino acids of said second molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 1694-1713 of an HCV polyprotein and SEQ ID NO:10; and

wherein said at least 5 amino acids of said third molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 2299-2318 of an HCV polyprotein and SEQ ID NO:19.

82. (Currently Amended) A combination of any of claims 55 ~~[[and]]~~or 68-70, wherein

said at least 5 amino acids of said first molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 1-20, 7-26, and 49-68 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:2 and SEQ ID NO:6;

said at least 5 amino acids of said second molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 1694-1713 and 1712-1731 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:10 and SEQ ID NO:12; and

wherein said at least 5 amino acids of said third molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 2275-2294 and 2299-2318 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:17 and [[and]] SEQ ID NO:19.

83. (Currently Amended) A combination of any of claims 55 [[and]]or 68-70, wherein

said at least 5 amino acids of said first molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 7-26, 13-32, 37-56, and 49-68 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO: 2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5 and SEQ ID NO:6;

said at least 5 amino acids of said second molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 1688-1707 and 1712-1731 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:9 and SEQ ID NO:12; and

wherein said at least 5 amino acids of said third molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 2275-2294 and 2299-2318 of an HCV polyprotein, SEQ ID NO:17 and [[and]] SEQ ID NO:19.

84. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 81, wherein

said at least 5 amino acids of said first molecule are selected from the amino acids of the group consisting of amino acids 7-26 of an HCV polyprotein and SEQ ID NO:2.

85. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 55, wherein said combination coats a well of an immunoassay plate.

86. (Currently Amended) A combination of any one of claims 68-70 , wherein said combination coats a well of an immunoassay plate.

87. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 81, wherein said combination coats a well of an immunoassay plate.

88. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 82, wherein said combination coats a well of an immunoassay plate.

89. (Previously Presented) A combination of claim 83, wherein said combination coats a well of an immunoassay plate.

90. (Withdrawn – Currently Amended) A combination of any of claims 55 [[and]]or 68-70, wherein said combination is bound to an immunoassay strip.

91. (Withdrawn) A combination of claim 82, wherein said combination is bound to an immunoassay strip.

92. (Withdrawn) A combination of claim 82, wherein said combination is bound to an immunoassay strip.

93. (Withdrawn) A combination of claim 83, wherein said combination is bound to an immunoassay strip.